



Linking Girls to the Land

Girl Scouts and Federal Natural Resource Agencies Partnering to Protect the Earth



Elliott Wildlife
Values Project







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What Is *Linking Girls to the Land*?

Linking Girls to the Land (LGTTL) is an interagency partnership between Girl Scouts of the USA's Elliott Wildlife Values Project and federal natural resource agencies, and other associated organizations. *LGTTL* encourages an estimated 35,000 Girl Scouts annually to work in partnership with federal* natural resource agencies to become leaders of national and local conservation projects focused on environmental education, volunteer service, outdoor skills development, and career exploration. Funding, travel opportunities, awards, and trainings help support this vision.

**When no federal natural resource agencies are available, state agencies may be contacted.*

LGTTL serves as an avenue for the Girl Scout Leadership Development Program. Through *LGTTL* girls **discover, connect** and **take action**. As the result of cooperative and experiential learning, girls acquire skills that build courage, confidence and character, inspiring them to become environmentally responsible and make the world a better place.

Communities, federal agencies and Girl Scouts across the country have benefited from a range of collaborative *LGTTL* projects. Some of the Girl Scout projects include:

- banding migratory birds
- building bluebird boxes
- burying drainage pipes
- clearing and stabilizing fence lines
- collecting seeds and reforesting public lands
- conducting tours in national parks
- creating a water conservation and patch program
- designing and completing community environmental awareness events
- establishing wildlife sanctuaries
- exploring careers in marine science and marine and wildlife biology
- implementing school recycling programs
- monitoring and testing water quality
- protecting wetlands
- reestablishing prairies
- teaching the principles of Leave No Trace camping and other environmental education programs



Girl Scouts in Michigan experience winter camping in Hiawatha National Forest.

Linking Girls to the Land projects are publicized through partner and Girl Scout communications (e.g., GSUSA Intranet, newsletters, *LEADER* magazine, press releases, e-mails, etc.). The positive media coverage, at both the local and national level, helps generate support for Girl Scout councils and their partners, as well as for local and national environmental issues.

The **Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics (LNT)** promotes and inspires responsible outdoor recreation through education, research and partnerships. Leave No Trace builds awareness, appreciation and respect for our wildlands.

The **National Marine Sanctuary Foundation (NMSF)** inspires all people to preserve, protect and promote our national marine sanctuaries. Through public and private sector partnerships, the Foundation creates conservation-based research, education and outreach programs designed to connect the public with ocean and coastal resources.

The **National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF)** believes environmental education is linked to core goals such as better health, improved education, environmentally sound and profitable business, and volunteerism in local communities. NEEF manages National Public Lands Day and the National Environmental Education Week.

The **National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA)**, and its members and partners work together to protect the park system and preserve the nation's natural, historical, and cultural heritage for future generations.

Take Pride in America® is a national partnership that encourages, supports, and recognizes volunteers who work to improve public parks, forests, grasslands, reservoirs, wildlife refuges, cultural and historic sites, local playgrounds, and other recreation areas. Take Pride involves federal, state, and local governments; conservation, youth, and recreation groups; and national corporations and organizations that work together to protect and enhance public lands.

Contact the Partners

- Visit www.epa.gov/linkinggirls and click on the "Partners" page for the latest contact information.
- Look for the agencies in the government/state pages of local telephone directories.

projects, and opportunities visit www.epa.gov/linking-girls or contact GSUSA, Elliott Wildlife Values Project at 1-800-478-7248 or linkinggirls@girlscouts.org.



A Girl Scout Senior explores nature through art at the Oxbow Bend in Grand Teton National Park.

"The bird banding was the neatest thing! I'd heard about it, but never knew exactly what it was." - Dana, age 16, Ohio

Additional Partners

The **American Hiking Society (AHS)** establishes, protects and maintains the Nation's footpaths and promotes the hiking experience for more than half a million outdoors people. It serves as the national voice of the American hiker and manages National Trails Day®.

The **Center for Wildlife Information – Be Bear Aware and Wildlife Stewardship Campaign** helps Girl Scouts enjoy wildlife safely and responsibly by teaching the latest safety techniques to avoid encounters with wild animals, especially bears. It provides wildlife avoidance and safety and stewardship educational materials, instructor manuals, and trainings.

GET INVOLVED!

Get a Patch - Get a Certificate



Get with the Land Patch and Certificate
Work with a federal* natural resource agency on an environmental project and complete patch criteria (available at www.girlscouts.org). A downloadable LGTTL Certificate is also available at www.epa.gov/linkinggirls.



EPA Water Drop Patch Project
Learn about watersheds, non-point source pollution, wetlands, and groundwater/drinking water, while completing activities in a booklet found at: www.epa.gov/adopt/patch/ or call the National Service Center for Environmental Publications (1-800-490-9198) for a free copy.

Get Funding

Linking Girls to the Land Council Grants

Develop an environmental education, outdoor skills development, or volunteer service project with a federal* conservation agency with council support, and apply for a grant.

The Nature of Learning Program and Grants

Use U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wildlife Refuge's as outdoor classrooms to promote a greater understanding of local conservation issues and apply for a grant. For more information, visit <http://refuges.fws.gov/education/nature-oflearning/index.html> or call 703-358-2386.

Get Away—on STUDIO 2B destinations

(www.studio2b.org/escape/destinations)

Wyoming's Wildlife Wonders

Study the ecology and natural history of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, including the Grand Teton National Park and Bridger-Teton National Forest, and develop an environmental action or research project.

New science and outdoor-related destinations are in ongoing development.

*"I learned that everything in an ecosystem is interdependent, so much in fact, that if even one tiny fragment is taken out, everything falls apart."
--Rebecca, age 16, Ohio*



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist teaches Girl Scouts about animals in their local environment.

Get Your Hands Dirty

Take Pride in America

Demonstrate local pride, initiative, and stewardship by volunteering on public lands such as public parks, playgrounds, forests, grasslands, wildlife refuges, and cultural and historic sites. Visit www.takepride.gov or call (202) 208-5848.

National Conservation Events

Participate in an event. A *National Conservation Events Calendar*, available at www.epa.gov/linkinggirls, includes National Public Lands Day (September) www.npld.com (202) 833-2933, National Trails Day (June) www.americanhiking.org (301) 565-6704 e-mail: ntd@americanhiking.org, and World Water Monitoring Day (September 18) www.worldwatermonitoringday.org (202) 898-0908, among many other events.

Hey, now I can tell folks I planted this tree – I'll have to stop by every now and then and check on it." – *National Public Lands Day volunteer (Arkansas)*

Get Trained

Leave No Trace (LNT) Trainings, Scholarships & Materials
Integrate Leave No Trace skills and ethics into your outdoor program and troop/group activities. Enroll in various trainings and courses and apply for a grant or scholarship. Request FREE LNT Subaru Traveling Trainings by booking six months in advance. Visit www.lnt.org or call (800) 332-8222.

Linking Girls to the Land Workshops

Explore LGTTL projects and opportunities. Girl Scout council representatives and federal* natural resource agency pro



The **U.S. National Park Service (NPS)** administers more than 350 national parks, seashores, monuments, historic sites, and recreation areas. Its mission is to protect and preserve cultural and natural resources found in these areas.



The mission of the **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** is to safeguard the natural environment —air, water, and land—and ensure that federal laws protecting human health and the environment are enforced.



The mission of the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)** is to analyze and predict changes in the environment and to conserve and manage coastal and marine resources. With its partners,

NOAA strives to achieve a balance between the use and protection of coastal and marine resources to ensure their health, sustainability, and vitality for today and future generations.



The **U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)** provides scientific information to minimize loss of life and property from natural disasters; manages water, biological, energy, and mineral resources; and enhances and protects our quality of life.

Note: The Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the U.S. National Park Service are agencies within the Department of the Interior. The U.S. Forest Service and the National Resources Conservation Service are part of the Department of Agriculture.



Girl Scouts improve their mountain biking skills at Pictures Rocks National Lakeshore.



Girls explore careers in fire management with U.S. Forest Service firefighters in California.

"It's great to know that I can really make a difference." –Angie, age 16, Indiana

Meet the Partners

Federal Natural Resource Agencies



The mission of the **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)** is to help sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations; agency manages approximately 260 million acres.



The **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)** oversees more than 500 national wildlife refuges and 70 national fish hatcheries; manages 92 million acres; protects endangered species, enforces wildlife laws, works to preserve wildlife around the world, and monitors international wildlife trade.



The **U.S. Forest Service (USFS)** manages 191 million acres of land in 156 national forests, providing for the sustained yield of renewable resources such as water, forage, wildlife, and wood; conducts forestry research and works with state/local governments, forest industries, and private landowners.



The **Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**, with offices in nearly every county in the United States, helps private landowners protect the natural resources on their land, and encourages science-based assistance and partnerships at the community level.

sionals meet and form plans for joint conservation projects. Interested in hosting a workshop? Contact GSUSA for *LGTTL* tips and information on presentation and marketing materials.

Get Going

Create your own *Linking Girls to the Land* project in partnership with a federal* natural resource agency. Review the *LGTTL* Resource Guide, to find out how Girl Scouts and agencies can work together. Learn about current Girl Scout earned grade-level awards, with activities related to the environment, outdoors and science. Use these national Girl Scout environmental resources in your efforts:

From Sidewalks to Treetops-The Amateur's Guide to Exploring Nature in Your Neighborhood, 2003

(video and booklet in English and Spanish)

Fun and Easy Activities: Nature and Science, 1996

(bilingual, English/Spanish)

Fun and Easy Nature & Science Investigations, 2002

(available in English and Spanish)

Linking Girls to the Land Resource Guide, 2003, 2006

Linking Girls to the Land Video/DVD, 2002

(90 minute and 11 minute tape)

Makin' Waves, STUDIO 2B Focus Book, 2004

Outdoor Education in Girl Scouting, 1996

Parks Matter, STUDIO 2B Focus Book, 2004

Visit the *LGTTL* Web site www.epa.gov/linkinggirls for more details.

"Snorkeling in the sea grasses and the mangroves was awesome!" - Carly, age 16, Texas



Girls partner with NOAA and National Marine Sanctuary Foundation to investigate coral reef ecology in the Florida Keys.

GET ACQUAINTED!

Meet the Girl Scouts

Girl Scouts of the USA helps build girls of courage, confidence and character who make the world a better place. There are 3.6 million girl and adult members throughout the United States, including U.S. territories, and in more than 90 countries through USA Girl Scouts Overseas. As part of the Girl Scout Law, girls pledge to do their best “to use resources wisely.” The Elliott Wildlife Values Project, through a nationally administered trust fund, supports wildlife conservation and education efforts with Girl Scouts.

Girl Scout Age Levels

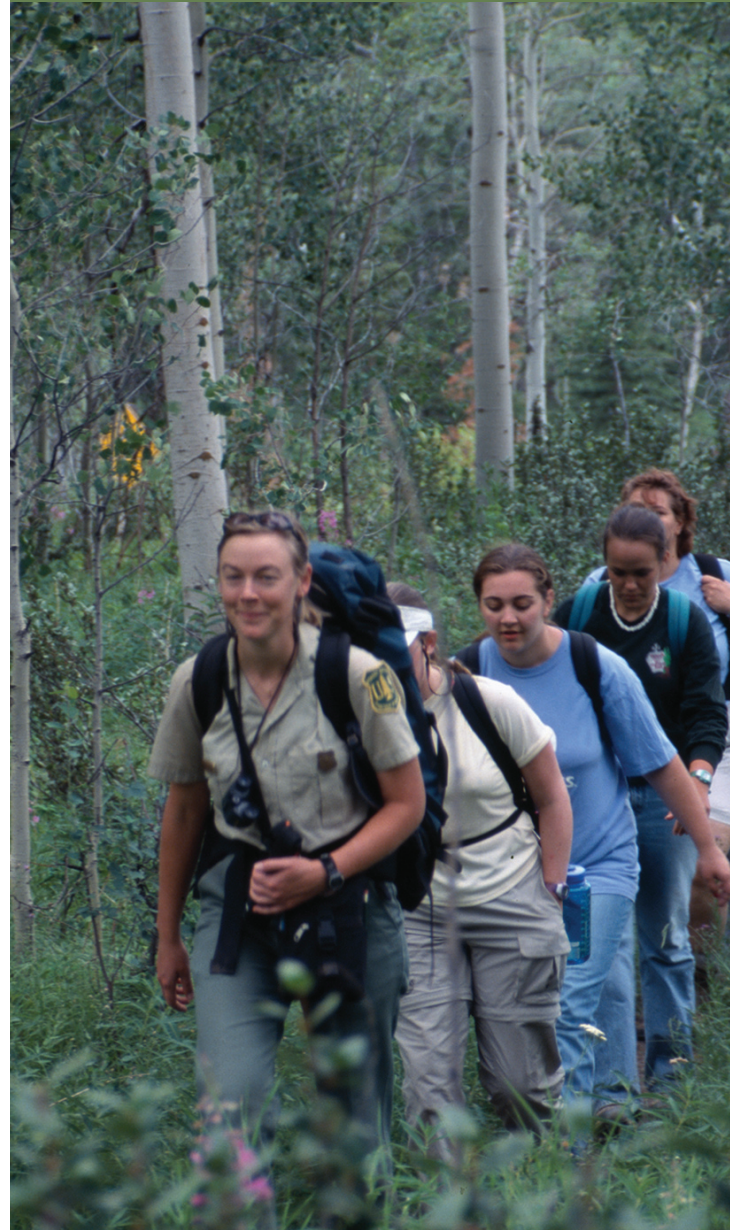
Girl Scouts are grouped into different age levels based on research related to developmental stages of growth. Girl Scout program is delivered uniquely and consistently within each age level.



Girl Scout Brownies discover what makes up the bottom of a local lake.



Girl Scouts in Ohio construct a deck on their council's environmental center.



U.S. Forest Service ranger trains adult volunteers and older girls in Leave No Trace ethics.

Girl Scout adults include volunteers or advisors who guide girl members and/or support leaders in their role or are staff at the national and council levels.

Contact a Girl Scout Council

- Go to www.girlscouts.org and click on “Find a Council.”
- Look under “Girl Scouts” in the telephone directory.

“I learned a lot about what makes an effective mentor—and will pass it on to others who are in leader training at my council.”
- Carolyn Libuser, adult volunteer, California